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TREASURE STATE HEALTH

VOL. XXI, No. 9 OFFICIAL BULLETIN — State Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, Helena, Montana 59601 DECEMBER 1972

Department Gears for Upcoming Legislature

A smattering of legislation dealing with the health of Montanans has been prepared by department personnel for the upcoming legislature. The bills range from several designed to put teeth into environmental laws to a package of family planning bills which was given a vote of non-support by the State Board of Health.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

Department attorney Chuck O'Donnell says the environmental legislation would allow the department to "legally enforce the Board of Health's orders through the State Attorney General's office"—making it possible to step in when local authorities drag their feet in such matters. Civil penalties under the water pollution law and clean air act would be provided for in order to allow for that office's involvement.

Other environmental legislation originating within the department deals with subdivisions, junked automobiles and environmental noise control.

SUBDIVISIONS

The subdivision bill would provide for more stringent control of sanitary facilities in new subdivisions according to Art Clarkson of the department's Water Quality Bureau. Clarkson says the biggest problem now existing is that the department gets into the act after subdivisions are approved and filed. Under the proposed legislation, the department would be able to stop unsatisfactory subdivisions before they are filed.

Another problem with the present law is that there is no penalty clause. Clarkson says the bill which he prepared would provide for fines and for enjoinment.

The other major problem, according to Clarkson, is that the current law "excludes any property of five acres in area or larger from the sanitary restriction" and developments are purposely being plotted in lots of five acres or more to escape restrictions. The proposed legislation would make restrictions applicable to plots of 10 acres or less and would add air pollution and solid waste disposal restrictions to the present water and sewer facility requirements.

One of the proposed pieces of legislation prepared by the department would subsidize the recycling of old cars through a $2 addition to the annual car registration fee.

AUTOMOBILE DISPOSAL

The junked automobile disposal plan would establish free motor vehicle graveyards for the public and subsidize the recycling of these vehicles by private enterprise through a $2 addition to the annual car registration fee.

The proposed plan also calls for requiring all auto wrecking yards to obtain licenses, screen and maintain their property in a compatible manner with surrounding areas and to keep records on every vehicle they handle.

If incorporated by the State Legislature, about half of the money from the additional car registration fee would go to counties for the establishment of free graveyards and possible retrieval of some cars from the countryside. The rest of the funds would be used to help pay for flattening vehicles and transporting them to shredder mills for recycling.

From 25 to 30 thousand motor vehicles enter disposal channels each year in Montana according to State Office of Motor Vehicle Registration figures.

NOISE CONTROL

To aid state communities in their fight against decibels, the department's Occupational Health Bureau has drafted enabling legislation which would give the Board of Health power to set up noise level standards for the state.

RETIREMENT HOME LICENSING

A problem now exists with hotels that take down their hotel signs rather than making improvements to meet state fire and sanitation standards and then rent out their rooms as sleeping rooms—often times to senior citizens. Environmental Services Bureau Chief Vern Sloulin says the department has prepared legislation that would bring these retirement or rooming homes under hotel and motel licensing requirements.

LABORATORY PERSONNEL LICENSING

Another department bill would offer Montanans protection from improperly performed clinical laboratory tests. Laboratory Division Administrator David Lackman says results of quality control studies in Mon-

(Continued on Page 4)

Augusta Gets Referral Center

Once a week Lewis and Clark County health nurse Vernie Burns rides the school bus from Lincoln to Augusta in order to bring public health services to residents of the sparsely-populated Augusta area.

She and representatives of other public service agencies are participating in a new kind of delivery system designed for rural areas by the Rocky Mountain Development Community Action Agency in Helena.

The old Augusta barber shop has been converted into the Augusta Multi-Service Center which is manned four hours a day in order to arrange for social and health services needed by area residents.

Center Director Mary Allen explains that many area residents are elderly and need help finding out what services are available to them. Then they need someone to make appointments for them to see representatives of the appropriate agencies.

Mrs. Allen arranges for people to see the representatives when they make their regular visits to the Augusta center. This eliminates the need for Augusta residents—many of whom do not drive—to travel long distances every time they need a social or health service in addition to cutting the amount of time public agencies need to spend in the rural community.

(Continued on Page 2)

Foster Grandmother Vida Redman is one of the 60 reasons for the Foster Grandparent Program's success in Montana. Read about how Boulder River School and Hospital patients react to their 'grandparents' on page 3.

TREASURE STATE HEALTH

OFFICIAL BULLETIN — STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Helena, Montana 59601

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MONTANA HEALTH

By Dr. Steven Kairy's, Chief
Preventive Health Services Bureau

COMMON SOCIAL POISONS

ALCOHOL

Immediate Effects on the Body

Alcohol is a depressant. The early effects, seemingly of stimulation, are due to a depression of central inhibition. All manner of motor performance are adversely affected by alcohol. Movements are slowed and made more inaccurate. Alcohol impairs the efficiency of mental function, even after ingestion of a moderate quantity. It slows the learning process, it causes the pulse rate to rise, blood pressure to fall and the skin blood vessels to engorge. Nausea and vomiting occur frequently the morning after drinking. Intoxication leads to drunkenness, coma —or alcoholic excitement—tremors, restlessness and, occasionally, seizures.

The Abstinence or Withdrawal Syndromes

Prolonged inebriety followed by a period of relative or complete non-use of alcohol often leads to tremors, hallucinations, seizures and delirium tremens —a condition marked by confusion, agitation, delusions, hallucinations, diluted pupils, fever, fast heart rate, profuse perspiration and elevated blood pressure.

Chronic Effects on the Body

These are again seen mainly after prolonged excessive use of alcohol. Some, however, can occur with the periodic excessive use of alcohol also. The list is extensive and impressive: Gastric ulcer disease, gastritis, cirrhosis (degeneration of the liver leading to innumerable problems), inflammation and abnormalities of the pancreas and generalized heart dysfunction (called cardiomyopathy).

Nutritional Diseases Secondary to Alcohol

1. Wernick-Korsakoff Syndrome—Characterized by loss of memory, confusion and abnormalities of the nerves to extremities.
2. Alcoholic Polyneuropathy—Abnormalities of movement and sensation secondary to effects on the nervous system. Legs feel numb or burn. Coordination is impaired.
3. Alcohol Amblyopia—Eye disturbances.
4. Pellagra

CAFFEINE

Overdose leads to insomnia, mild delirium, ringing in the ears and fast heart beat. Serious disturbances of the heart rate can occur. Tea and coffee contain 150 milligrams of caffeine—symptoms occur with the consumption of from 1000 to 6000 mg. per day.

NICOTINE

Cigarette smoking is a significant risk factor in the development of coronary heart diseases—"heart attacks".

Smoking is the most important cause of chronic obstructive lung disease (Emphysema) in the United States and of chronic bronchitis. Smokers show an increased incidence of cough, sputum production and breathlessness.

Cigarette smoking is the main cause of lung cancer in men and is an increasing cause of lung cancer in women.

Smoking is a significant factor in the development of cancer of the larynx (the voice box).

Smoking has been linked with cancer of the mouth, esophagus and urinary bladder.

Smoking during pregnancy leads to decreased infant birthweight and increased incidence of prematurity.

Cigarette smoking males have an increased prevalence of peptic ulcer disease.

DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS.

Augusta Gets Referral Center

(Continued from Page 1)

The most important thing is that more Augusta residents are finding out about and using services which they need. For example, Mrs. Allen says many older people had been hesitant to apply for food stamps because they associated them with welfare. By talking with them individually and by including an article on food stamps in the center's newspaper Mrs. Allen was able to change the attitudes of the people and get them to use the stamps.

Many older people used to have to go into Choteau, Great Falls, and Helena regularly to see physicians. Now the public health nurse can check in with them on a regular basis to see how they're feeling and do tests authorized by their doctors. It puts a strain on senior citizens, Mrs. Burns says, to have to travel to a population center as often as once a week to have something as simple as a blood pressure test done and she hopes more doctors will have her check on their patients as they learn about the center.

In addition to checking on older residents, Mrs. Burns uses the center as a starting point for providing other health services. She runs immunization and diabetic-testing clinics and refers people to the family planning clinic in Helena in addition to acting as school nurse for the Augusta schools and the Auchard Creek Hutterite School outside of town.

Some of the other people providing services through the center are Social Security representatives, county extension agents, welfare social workers, Legal Services lawyers, veterans affairs people and Farm Home Administration representatives.

Besides acting as a referral outlet, the center also has a much-used library and "some people just come in for a cup of coffee" according to Mrs. Allen.

For the price of Mrs. Allen's salary and the center's rent, heat, lights and phone a lot more Augusta-area residents are obtaining services than ever before.

"Everyone who uses the center seems to be real happy with it," Mrs. Allen says as she talks about the ever decreasing problem of reaching people who need help but don't know free services are available.

Rocky Mountain Development Council Director Gene Huntington agrees that "everybody loves it" and hopes "that other agencies will see its value" and eventually share in the cost of running rural help projects.

Since the Augusta Multi-Service Center was started this summer many residents of the rural Augusta community have started receiving social and health services some had never known existed.

Average Man To Live Longer

Normal Americans will live to be 105 and 110 years of age within 25 years according to a futurologist at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, Calif.

Dr. Harvey Wheeler says his prediction of a prolonged life span stems from the current "biological revolution"—or the unlocking of the genetic code.

By 1997, he says, people in their 70's and 80's will live as vigorously as today's 50-year-olds.

A "retirement revolution" will result, he predicts, that will involve an increase in community-oriented work. Americans will then have several different occupations during a life span.

Retarded to be Helped in Hometowns

The Boulder River School and Hospital is currently developing a plan for meeting the needs of the mentally retarded within their own communities rather than at the Boulder institution.

"The idea is to keep the mentally retarded person in, or as near to, his home community as possible," according to Robert Perry, superintendent of the state institution.

Referred to as the community systems concept, the plan involves purchasing services for the retarded—as well as people with epilepsy and cerebral palsy—in their hometowns or nearby population centers. This prevents cutting them off from close associations with family and friends and enables them to become contributing members of their communities.

"Clients are not warehoused in institutions, but are becoming active persons in their communities," says Charlie Trott, community services chief at the Boulder facility.

Some of the services that might be provided outside the Boulder institution to these handicapped persons would be job training, medical care, counseling, recreation and housing.

The program is to be planned within the five Comprehensive Health Planning districts in the state by councils made up of government and community service people as well as those people who use the services.

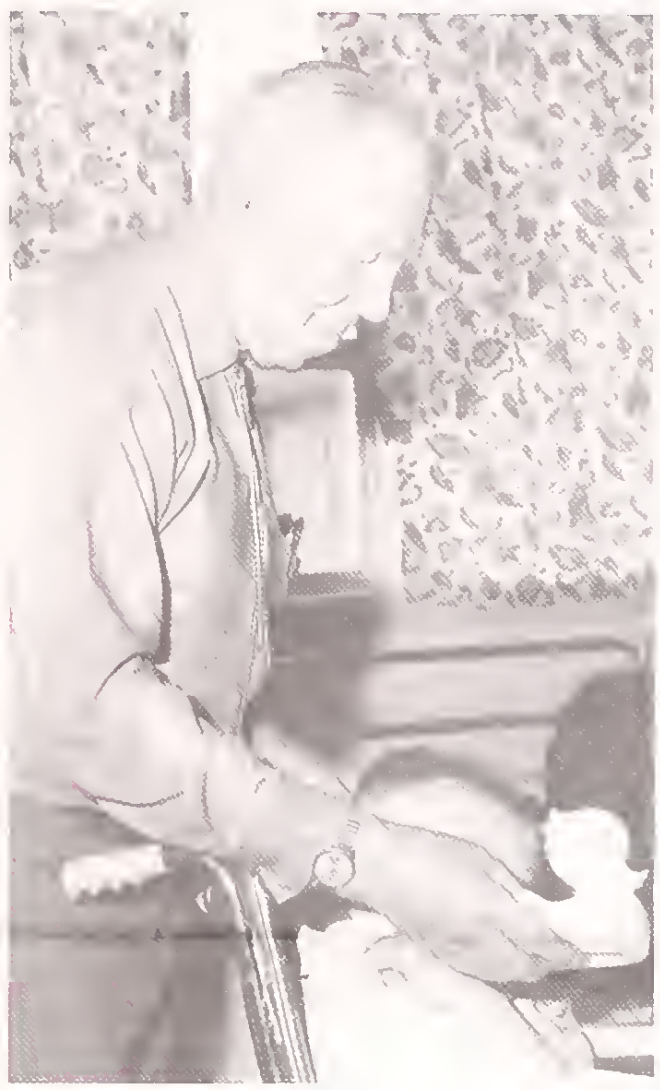
Although a successful effort is being made to reduce the number of patients at the Boulder facility to just those who cannot get along outside of an institution, Trott says there are many patients still at Boulder who could benefit from community services.

Perry says the institution is "working toward a July 1 inauguration" of the concept, adding: "We are now working with a select group of 400 people that are former patients at Boulder and the system is working out very well."

The program is to be funded through the Federal Development Disabilities Act as well as State and Social and Rehabilitation Services funds.

Foster Grandparents Bring Love to Boulder

Five mornings a week the 60 reasons for the Foster Grandparent Program's success in Montana arrive at the Boulder River School and Hospital in buses from the Helena and Butte areas.



Foster Grandfather Howard Koloen

Bringing with them their love for children and their desire to be a valuable part of society, the men and women who are varying distances down the life road from 60 spend four hours a day Monday through Friday providing what institution workers admit they cannot—the human affection on a one-to-one basis that retarded children so desperately need and deserve.

Conceived six years ago by Federal poverty program officials, the Foster Grandparent Program has been a heartwarming success. The foster grandmothers and grandfathers justly feel like important society members and receive an annual stipend of $1,670 to augment their small social security checks. The children receive priceless personal affection — possibly the first they have ever known.

Each grandparent is assigned two children, spending two hours alone every day with each child. According to Holly Luck, the young assistant director of the program administered by the Helena-based Rocky Mountain Development Council, "the results can sometimes be astounding."

"We have seen children," she says, "that haven't talked begin to talk, and many more of the children get to go home in the summer than did before the program was started."

As for the grandparents, Miss Luck has this to say: "It has been shown that when persons of retirement age feel helpful and useful, as well as needed and appreciated, they come alive. One lady who went to work as a Foster Grandparent could hardly walk even using two crutches — now she gets around better than I do! You wouldn't believe how much good it does them having someone to love and to love them."

Training for a foster grandparent job is simple. Grandparents are simply told to act like grandparents and this could include feeding their foster grandchildren, reading to them and telling them stories, taking them for walks and just showing that they care.

Some of Miss Luck's favorite grandpersons are men. She says enthusiastically: "The men are great. They teach the older boys how to shave, take the kids for long walks, fishing, bicycle riding . . . I wouldn't trade them for anything."

According to estimates made by one private consulting service, the national program actually generates from $1 million to $4 million more in benefits than it costs. Funded at $25 million to provide foster grandparents in 435 schools and institutions across the nation, the program takes many elderly persons off welfare rolls. In addition, the extra care provided by the program speeds the progress of many patients and reduces the load on tax-supported public institutions.

But the real benefits are human ones. "A month ago, my boy couldn't even put a puzzle together," one foster grandmother recently bragged at the Boulder institution. "Now I can't bring them to him fast enough."

Foster Grandmother Cora Cloud

Foster Grandmother Agatha Keneally

Valley Nursery in Helena is one Montana nursery which sold recyclable Christmas trees to ecology-minded Montanans this Christmas season. Mrs. Clayton Berg, who operates the nursery with her husband, says they sell most of the trees to people who have just recently moved to Montana. "Most of the natives still go out and chop them down," she says, "which is good if they do it the proper way and don't just cut the first one that they come to." The Bergs recommend that people plant trees after Christmas along a "barren road" if they don't need a good tree in their own yards.

Accidents Take Many in Prime

No one can argue with watching your diet and getting enough rest and exercise—but avoiding accidents is probably the best way to insure that you'll be around to enjoy the retirement years according to the chief of the department's Records and Statistics Bureau, John Wilson.

"The prevention of all fatal accidents," he says, "would have added many more years to the working life expectancies of Montana people than would the elimination of all deaths from heart, cancer and strokes combined."

Fatal accidents outrank every other cause of death for Montanans within the ages of 20 and 65 he says, but accident prevention programs have "to change the behavior pattern of a person and this is an extremely difficult, slow and expensive process."

Nearly 73 per cent of all deaths in the 20 to 24 age group are due to accidents, according to bureau statistics for 1971, with almost 60 per cent of all deaths within this age group due to motor vehicle accidents alone—which are the biggest cause of accidental deaths in Montana.

Almost 45 per cent of all deaths for the age group 25 to 34 were due to accidents last year. Twenty-eight per cent of all deaths being attributed to motor vehicle accidents.

For the age group 35 to 44 just over 28 per cent of the 1971 deaths were caused by accidents, with over 16 per cent of the deaths due to motor vehicle accidents.

Fourteen per cent of those Montanans between the ages of 45 and 54 who died last year died because of accidents, nearly 7 per cent of the motor vehicle variety.

And, of those deaths for Montanans aged 55 to 64, slightly over 6 per cent were due to accidents, with nearly 3 per cent due to motor vehicle accidents.

Other big causes of accident deaths for the working age Montanans in 1971 were drowning, industrial accidents and falls.

"Without any effort at all on the part of the medical profession," Wilson says, "we can all increase the average length of life considerably through the avoidance of unnecessary accidents."

Department Drafts Legislation

(Continued from Page 1)

tana and other parts of the country as a part of Medicare surveillance has shown that some tests "are being carried out by unqualified personnel with results which are in error."

The proposed legislation would provide for the licensing of personnel performing clinical laboratory tests in Montana as well as for the licensing of facilities where these tests are done.

Lackman says the U.S. Public Health Service and the New York City Department of Health carried out research which showed "about 25 per cent of the results in the laboratories they surveyed were in error." This, he says, resulted in the enactment of the Clinical Laboratories Improvement Act of 1967 which only applies to laboratories engaged in interstate commerce. States wanting controls of laboratory work within their boundaries, therefore, have to enact their own legislation. Half the states have done so according to Lackman.

MEDICAL TEST REQUIREMENTS

Additional clinical tests to insure the good health of newborns are part of another group of department legislation. Already existing state law would be amended to require premarital blood typing to include RH factor and testing for Rubella antibodies.

Another bill would provide for a state advisory council to determine those tests which would be required for newborn infants—furnishing the assistance of the department and the Boulder River School and Hospital.

A third piece of legislation would require that women seeking prenatal care be tested for syphilis and that positive tests be reported to the department.

FLUORIDATION

The department is offering fluoridation legislation again this year. The proposed amendment would "ask that the Board of Health be granted authority to request fluoridation in communities and to arrange for grants from the federal government for necessary equipment and supplies" according to Dental Health Bureau Chief Arthur Terrill.

MOSQUITO ABATEMENT

Property owners in Montana communities would have an equal voice with ranchers and farmers in the formation of mosquito abatement districts under another piece of proposed department legislation. Under present law, owners of 51 per cent of a land area can stop district formation.

County Commissioners would also be able to call a referendum vote if they doubted district creation was in the best interest of an area and its residents.

FAMILY PLANNING

A package of family planning bills prepared by Maternal and Child Health Bureau Chief Richard Welch, M.D., would authorize the department to provide family planning services to all Montanans regardless of "sex, race, age, income, number of children, marital status, citizenship or motive" and would ask for $20,000 to make the state eligible for $60,000 of federal matching funds to help run the state program.

The legislation would also make it possible for minors to get contraceptives without the consent of parents or guardians. Welch feels this is "a stop-gap measure designed to buy time for sexually-active teenagers."

He says professional counseling would be implemented to try to change the behavior of these young people, but feels measures are necessary to prevent unwanted pregnancies. To ignore the big problem of out-of-wedlock births in Montana would be making a choice, he says, to continue making an increasing number of teenagers pay the penalty of unwanted pregnancies with all the tragedy that follows for themselves and their children.

Welch says his proposed legislation will be introduced. Although the Board of Health recently passed a resolution to prohibit department employes from preparing the family planning bills for submission to the legislature, it had no authority to do so. The bills will not, however, be part of the official department slate according to O'Donnell.

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HEALTH BRIEFS

(Helena)—Lt. Gov. elect Bill Christiansen says the State Environmental Quality Council should consider recommending a "disturbed acre fee" to encourage the reclamation of strip-mined land. He also suggested legislation that would require coal companies to mine all seams in an area being mined.

(New York)—The United Nations has suggested that 1974 be declared World Population Year with activities stressing the need for population studies and means of population growth control.

(Salt Lake City)—A University of Utah professor believes he has found a way to spot geothermal features which may someday be used for "pollutionless hydroelectric plants" in Utah. Robert Smith says he and his assistants have identified significant earthquake zones from southern Utah through Montana and in central Idaho that may be associated with potential sources of geothermal energy.

(Washington)—Major restrictions on the transport and sale of small pet turtles have been ordered by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare because of evidence that the turtles cause nearly 300,000 cases of salmonella poisoning a year.

(Haverford, Pa.)—Four Delaware County, Pa. towns will be involved in a two-year recycling experiment early next year. Five hundred families will be asked to separate glass, paper and metal from their other garbage in order to determine if it is possible to collect material for recycling on a large scale. The collected materials will be taken to various industries for use in producing new products.

(Washington)—Some 20 clinics are to be set up by the end of next year for the early detection of breast cancer under a joint American Cancer Society and National Cancer Institute program. The facilities are expected to pick up breast cancer cases in very early stages before a lump appears by utilizing mammography and thermography in addition to other methods.

(Washington)—The Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service reports that dangerous amounts of toxic metals from automobile exhaust are getting into roadside soil. Lead and zinc, the service says, were found in earthworms along two stretches of road in Maryland in quantities that would be fatal to worm-eating birds. Nickel and cadmium were also found in the worms.

(Washington)—After testing 54 motorcycle helmets for the government, an independent laboratory has found only eight models which passed tests on withstanding crash impact, penetration by a steel dart and strength of the chin strap for helmet retention. However, no recalls are planned because the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration lacks authority to order such moves for any products.